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Homemaker News

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CHRISTMAS PLUM PUDDINGS
NEED TO AGE FOR FLAVOR

Plum pudding and its close relative, fruit cake, improve with age.

_____ of the _____ Extension Service, says that either of these holiday standbys made in late November will taste better for ripening until Christmas. Some, made along with the household supply, can be used for gifts. Fruit cakes baked in glass casseroles are attractive and store well under the glass lid of the casserole.

Both plum puddings and fruit cakes are put together in much the same way, but the puddings are usually richer and more moist. They contain more fat and more liquid, and are cooked by steaming in a greased can instead of by baking. Store plum puddings in tight tins, and reheat by steaming.

A few pointers: Pick the fruit over, wash and dry it. Chop it in a bowl; do not grind. Cut citron with a sharp knife. Candied grapefruit peel makes a good substitute for citron; candied cranberries for candied cherries. Cut up nuts with a knife. Look out for bits of shell and be sure the nuts are fresh.

The liquid may be cider, grape juice, tart jelly, sour cream, molasses, honey, or maple sirup. Honey helps to keep the cake moist, but only mild-flavored honey or molasses is desirable.

Sift the flour with the leavening and spices, and mix half of it with the fruits and nuts to keep them evenly distributed throughout the dough. Use the hand to mix well. Add egg whites last.

Fruit cake scorches easily, so line the pans with well-greased paper. Cooked slowly at very moderate temperature, about 300° F., a 5- or 6-pound cake takes 3 to 4 hours to bake.

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